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in population and in territory for purposes of civil order, what courts were instituted for the maintaining of justice between man and man, what crimes were most frequent and flagrant, and what punishments were meted out for these offenses.

The *Leges Edwardi Confessoris* is a valuable source of original information concerning the England of the twelfth century. In a literary, philological, and historical way it is of great value. From it, at first hand, we gain trustworthy knowledge respecting the church, the king, the nobility, the territorial and political subdivisions, the judicial processes, the laws, crimes, and punishments. These points Professor Liebermann with great clearness and a wealth of learning brings out and emphasizes in the dissertation before us.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. ERI B. HULBERT.

A HISTORY OF AURICULAR CONFESSION AND INDULGENCES IN THE LATIN CHURCH. Vols. I, II, III. By HENRY CHARLES LEA. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1896.

IT is with justifiable pride in American historical scholarship that we welcome another contribution from the pen of Mr. Lea. Those who have read his previous works on *Studies in Church History*, *Superstition and Force*, *The History of the Inquisition*, *The History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*, will find their highest anticipations realized in *History of Confession and Indulgences*.

It will be seen that all Mr. Lea's subjects are closely related, and that naturally his thorough treatment of each one has thrown light on all the rest. We have then here a group of studies as exhaustive and as masterly as they could well be. Our author has not merely been fortunate in his grouping, but in other respects he was peculiarly qualified for his great undertaking. To begin with he had the natural endowments for an historian. Among these are a great capacity for acquiring and sifting facts, large sympathy with the weaknesses and even the follies of humanity, the generalizing power that is able to bring order out of widely diverse and numerous masses of facts, the judicial calm that arises above passion or partisanship, the love of truth that rests only in perfect justice. When such a mind is turned upon complex and conflicting historical situations we expect thoroughness, orderly arrangement, and illumination. So it seems to us that in the work before us we have a treatment of confession and indulgences that will render further investigation of this particular kind unnecessary for years.

Mr. Lea does not propose a philosophical treatment of his subject —a method of historical treatment perfectly legitimate—but rather a treatment that must always precede philosophical consideration. He proposes an investigation of the facts. He proposes, moreover, that his facts shall come in every case from the original sources and that they shall be entirely representative. The temptation of a Protestant writer on a subject of this kind is always, even if unconsciously, to be unjust. Our author has accordingly refrained from consulting Protestant writers and confined himself "exclusively to original and to Catholic authorities, confident that what might thus be lost in completeness would be compensated by accuracy and impartiality." He has purposely refrained from extensive comment and preferred to allow the facts to tell their own story. It will thus be seen that the treatise is to be purely and broadly historical and not in any sense polemical. The entire work of more than sixteen hundred pages is a vast collection of facts that at first might seem labyrinthine; but really it is not so, for the facts have been correctly grouped and so lead to their conclusions with irresistible power. Exact references are made to the sources of information, so that should anyone doubt the statements of facts, and consequently the validity of the inferences, verification is always possible.

The first two volumes treat of Confession and Absolution, the third of Indulgences.

The great ideas and systems, good and bad, that have controlled the world have never sprung full grown into existence. In almost all cases they have had microscopic beginnings, have had to struggle for existence, for growth, and for dominion. This was exactly true of confession and indulgences. In the days of primitive Christianity men had immediate access to the Father through the Son. There was little, if any, thought of priestly intervention. But on account of the necessary growth of organization and the ever-present weakness and sinfulness the necessity for discipline became urgent. Penance, reconciliation, heresies, the pardon of sin by priests, the power of the keys, confession, jurisdiction, the confessional, indulgences have their beginnings. Then, as the centuries move on, there is developed a spiritual autocracy the like of which the world has never seen. It is perfectly easy to understand how all these ideas could start. A beginning having been made the development departed farther and farther from the spirit, emphasized more and more the letter, extended its ramifications in all possible directions, became ever more artificial, until there grew

up a vast and all-embracing system of externalism entirely mechanical, from which the original spirit had taken its flight. In this complete change of attitude the church "has abandoned its function as the guardian of morality, and has devoted itself to smoothing and broadening the steep and narrow path. In each successive age it has claimed that the increasing wickedness of man renders impossible the maintenance of the old severity, and by condescending it has stimulated rather than repressed the evil. Its effort has been, not to make men better, but to save them from the consequences of their sins. The power which it claims as entrusted to it by God has been wielded to elude and not to vindicate the justice of God. . . . . If the sinner cannot be induced to abandon his sin he can at least be kept in ignorance that he sins; his fear of hell can be removed by absolution and of purgatory by an indulgence; his conscience can be soothed and he can be kept in obedience to the kindly mother church, whose benignity thus assures him of heaven without imposing burdens on earth too heavy for his weakness."[1]

It is difficult for one not acquainted with mediæval times to understand how these ideas could so entirely dominate everything.

A good illustration is seen in the Jubilee—an outgrowth of indulgences. It was appointed in 1300 by Boniface VIII. Plenary indulgence was offered to every Christian who for certain days would worship at the tombs of Peter and Paul. This led immense hosts of pilgrims to set out for Rome. They entered like invading armies. "Aged men were brought on litters, and from Savoy there came one more than a hundred years old, carried by his son. In Rome the crowds were so great that many were crushed and famine was feared. . . . . Ventura says that during his stay of fifteen days he many times saw men and women trampled under foot, and more than once he narrowly escaped the same fate. On Christmas eve the crowd was estimated by the Romans at two millions." They came from all quarters of Christendom. The profits to the church were enormous. At first the Jubilee was to occur every hundred years, but the demand became so great that the time was reduced to fifty years, then to thirty-three years, then to twenty-five.

The thinkers of the times, as of late times, had many hard nuts to crack, but they went at it with mediæval assurance. Unfortunately the great men of the different periods often failed to agree. But as the age was entirely uncritical these disagreements did not prevent the

[1] Vol. III, p. 583.

rapid growth and universal extension of confession and indulgences. Mr. Lea, with his infinite wealth of facts, flashes the clear, cold light of history into all these intricate windings, and we are able to understand how these things so impossible to us, with our enlightened and critical Protestantism, were possible then.

The Reformation came in time to save the church from becoming an instrumentality of unmixed evil. Protestantism arose as a permament competitor and Romanism was forced into new adaptations, but it has really abated none of its claims, and our author concludes that "there is no reason to doubt that it has entered upon a new career of even wider influence and prosperity than those that have preceded it."

J. W. MONCRIEF.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

STUDIES SUBSIDIARY TO THE WORKS OF BISHOP BUTLER. By the RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE. New York: The Macmillan Co. London: Henry Frowde. Pp. vii + 370. $2.

THIS volume contains twenty-one essays, "which are meant to be supplementary to the works of Butler." The first part, headed "Butler," is of a more general character, discussing such subjects as Butler's method, its application to the Scriptures, his censors, his mental qualities, theology, his celebrity and influence; the second part, "Subsidiary," examines specific doctrines, as a future life, necessity or determinism, teleology, miracle, and the mediation of Christ. The aim is explanatory and apologetic, to show the character and value of Bishop Butler's works, particularly the *Analogy*, to meet the objections of his censors, and to recommend his writings "for permanent and classical study by the more thoughtful minds." The method in these writings is valued more highly than the argument. This method does not aim at scientific demonstration, for it is admitted that this is not possible in matters pertaining to revelation and spirituality. The reasoning of the Bishop is more concerned with practice than with knowledge. Since "probability is the guide of life," he is everywhere intent on discovering what is probable or likely in religion, holding that the strongest reason amid conflicting evidences demands the assent of the mind. Butler "was engaged in an endeavor to show to those who demanded an absolute certainty in the proofs of religion that this demand was unreasonable; and the method he pursued in this demonstration was to point out to them how much of their own daily